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fact sheet

CENTER FOR THE AMERICAN WOMAN AND POLITICS
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WOMEN APPOINTED TO STATE CABINETS 1986

In mid-1986, women held 17.9% of appointed positions in governors' cabinets; out of a total of 845 appointed state cabinet officials, 151 were women.[1] This figure represents a substantial increase from 1981, when women were 12.8% of all state cabinet appointees, and 1983, when women held 15.1% of such positions.

Of the 151 women in appointed state cabinet positions, 26 served in the area of health and social services, a field which also had the highest concentration of women in 1983. The number of women in such posts was more than twice that in any other area.

Functional Area of Appointment	Percentage Distribution of State Cabinet Positions Held by Women
Health/Social Services	17.2
Government Services/Government Administration	7.9
Labor/Industrial Relations/Employment Security	7.3
Finance/Budget/Taxation/Revenue	7.3
Community Affairs/Planning/Housing	5.3
Environmental Protection/Natural Resources	5.3
Education	5.3
Aging	4.6
Human Rights/Civil Rights/Women's Rights	4.6
State Personnel	4.6
Governor's Staff	4.0
Tourism/Recreation/Culture	3.3
Licensing/Regulation	2.6
Banking/Financial Institutions	2.6
Economic Development/Commerce	2.6
Energy/Utility Regulation	2.6
State	2.0
Transportation	2.0
Other	8.6
Total	100%[2]

Louisiana had the greatest proportion of women in its state cabinet; Governor Edwin Edwards (D) appointed 6 women to his 14 member cabinet, or 42.9%. In addition to Louisiana, 12 other states had 20% or more women in their cabinets. They are:[3]

Vermont	(D)	40.0	Massachusetts	(D)	27.3
Virginia	(D)	38.9	Minnesota	(D)	26.9
Arizona	(D)	35.0	North Carolina	(R)	23.1
New Mexico	(D)	31.3	Kentucky	(D)	22.2
Maryland	(D)	30.8	California	(R)	20.0
New Jersey	(R)	28.6	Washington	(D)	20.0

The two states with women governors, **Vermont** and **Kentucky**, ranked second and eleventh respectively in the proportions of women in their cabinets.

Every state with an appointed cabinet had at least one woman in that body. The states with the lowest proportions of women in their cabinets were:

Idaho	(D)	5.3	Alabama	(D)	11.1
Missouri	(R)	6.7	Delaware	(R)	11.1
Montana	(D)	6.7	Colorado	(D)	11.8
Oklahoma	(D)	6.7	Hawaii	(D)	12.5
Utah	(R)	8.0	Pennsylvania	(R)	12.5

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[1] Data were collected in the summer of 1986 by writing to every governor to request a list of cabinet members. Figures include members of governors' staffs with cabinet status, but not elected cabinet officials. The governors of Georgia, Indiana, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, West Virginia and Wyoming do not have cabinet equivalents; in Connecticut, Florida and Mississippi all cabinet members are elected.

[2] Percentages may not add precisely to 100 because of rounding.

[3] Letters in parentheses following each state indicate political party of current governor.

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STATE	# WOMEN/TOTAL CABINET POSITIONS	% WOMEN IN CABINET	RANK AMONG STATES
ALABAMA	2/18	11.1	33
ALASKA	3/17	17.6	17
ARIZONA	7/20	35.0	4
ARKANSAS	4/29	13.8	28
CALIFORNIA	2/10	20.0	12
COLORADO	2/17	11.8	32
CONNECTICUT	NA	NA	NA
DELAWARE	2/18	11.1	33
FLORIDA	NA	NA	NA
GEORGIA	NA	NA	NA
HAWAII	2/16	12.5	30
IDAHO	1/19	5.3	39
ILLINOIS	7/38	18.4	16
INDIANA	NA	NA	NA
IOWA	3/18	16.7	19
KANSAS	2/13	15.4	24
KENTUCKY	4/18	22.2	11
LOUISIANA	6/14	42.9	1
MAINE	4/24	16.7	19
MARYLAND	4/13	30.8	6
MASSACHUSETTS	3/11	27.3	8
MICHIGAN	5/27	18.5	15
MINNESOTA	7/26	26.9	9
MISSISSIPPI	NA	NA	NA
MISSOURI	1/15	6.7	36
MONTANA	1/15	6.7	36
NEBRASKA	5/29	17.2	18
NEVADA	4/30	13.3	29
NEW HAMPSHIRE	NA	NA	NA
NEW JERSEY	6/21	28.6	7
NEW MEXICO	5/16	31.3	5
NEW YORK	12/77	15.4	24
NORTH CAROLINA	3/13	23.1	10
NORTH DAKOTA	3/18	16.7	19
OHIO	5/30	16.7	19
OKLAHOMA	1/15	6.7	36
OREGON	5/36	13.9	27
PENNSYLVANIA	3/24	12.5	30
RHODE ISLAND	NA	NA	NA
SOUTH CAROLINA	NA	NA	NA
SOUTH DAKOTA	4/21	19.0	14
TENNESSEE	4/25	16.0	23
TEXAS	NA	NA	NA
UTAH	2/25	8.0	35
VERMONT	2/5	40.0	2
VIRGINIA	7/18	38.9	3
WASHINGTON	4/20	20.0	12
WEST VIRGINIA	NA	NA	NA
WISCONSIN	4/26	15.4	24
WYOMING	NA	NA	NA
TOTAL	151/845	17.9	

NOTE: States with same percentages are given same rank.